## THE COMMUNITY

The chewing of 49
betel-nut is the first gesture of hospitality and the main social 574
pastime of the entire archipelago. To chew betel, a piece of the 276
green nut of the betel palm is dabbed with a little lime, wrapped in pepper leaves, *sirih*, and the whole chewed together with a large wad of shredded tobacco that is held under a monstrously protruding lower lip. The combination of betel, *sirih*, and lime produces an abundant flow of saliva, red as blood, and the betel addict spits constantly, leaving crimson splotches wherever he goes. After certain guests departed, our house-boy always had to wash the veranda steps because they looked as if a murder had been committed on them. Today betel-chewing is not favoured 276
by the younger generation, not only because it looks so disagree- [178]
able, but because it spoils the teeth. The older the person, the fonder he is of betel, and the ingredients are always kept on hand in boxes with little compartments or in special satchels of woven pandanus. Old men without teeth have a special bamboo tube [886]
with an iron rod to mash the various ingredients together. The
*sirih*, betel, and lime are presented to guests in little ready-made [431]
packages often beautifully decorated with streamers of delicately cut-out palm-leaf. They are called *tjanang* or *baséh*, a gift.

A host must act as servant to his guests, himself attending to 574
their comfort and not partaking of the refreshments. Meals are 264
also served by the host, even if he has servants and assistants, and he can eat only after the guests have finished. If the visitors come from another village, they are expected to stay for the night and even for days at a time. The place of honour in the house is then assigned to them. After a reasonable period of time the visit is repaid and the presents reciprocated.

Very strict are the rules between men and women. On public 562
occasions men and women keep to themselves in separate groups, 576
and people from Gianyar are shocked to see the sexes mingle in Badung while watching a show. In the same manner the people
of Badung are disgusted because in Tabanan men and women [515]
bathe near together. It is rude to look into a public bath and even worse to enter it unless to bathe. Then the other bathers become figuratively invisible.

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562 become figuratively invisible. Great courtesy is shown even
576 among people who are intimate and it is extremely unusual for a man to "get fresh" with a girl in public; should it happen, the man would be severely punished. Thus a woman can confidently remain in her house while her male relatives are away at work, and a girl can go anywhere without fear of being approached by a stranger. Girls of high caste usually go chaperoned. Lovers are particularly careful not to show their emotions in public.

264 To neglect releasing a loud belch after a meal would be taken
576 by the host as a sign that the food was not satisfactory. In general the Balinese are very frank in actions that would be out of the question among us, such as clearing the throat, spitting, and so forth. These are perfectly normal actions no one needs to conceal.

576 But the key to Balinese etiquette among the castes consists in
564 the language spoken and in keeping at the proper level. Under
[191] no circumstance should a common man stand higher than an aristocrat. If a lowly person has to pass a nobleman who is sitting, he stoops in front of him until he is reasonably far away, and to address his superior he must squat or sit on the ground clasping his hands together in front of his chest or over his left shoulder. To retire, after begging leave, he walks backwards, stooping and holding his hands clasped.

## LANGUAGE

191 When two strange Balinese meet, as for instance on the road,
564 they call each other as *djeró*, a safe, polite way of addressing
576 someone whose title is unknown. Since there are no outward signs of caste, the appropriate titles cannot be used and all the words for "you" (*tjaí, nyaí, naní*) are extremely familiar and derogatory. Strangers talk in the middle language, a compromise between the daily speech and the polite tongue. Should, however, one be of low caste and the other a nobleman, it would be wrong for them to continue talking in this manner, and one of

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474 575 [345] [423] halls, the *balé bandjar*, a club-house without special religious significance, with its drum-tower to call to meetings. The *balé bandjar* is provided with a kitchen and with all sorts of cooking-implements: pots and pans, chopping-blocks, knives, etc., which [422] are lent to members who require them. The *bandjars* also own the village orchestras and the dancing-properties — costumes, masks, and head-dresses — which are stored in a *gedong*, a brick building where they are safe from theft or fire.

517 575 The men spend most of their spare time in the *balé bandjar*, gossiping, trying out their fighting cocks, watching a rehearsal of a play or of the orchestra, or just sitting. If the *bandjar* is prosperous, it takes great pride in giving elaborate banquets with music and entertainment. These may happen at the great national festivals, at the anniversary of their little *bandjar* temple, or at the inauguration of a new roof, a new orchestra or dancing-group. But also the private festivals of the members become *bandjar* affairs, and *bandjars* like Belaluan, where we lived, celebrated 574 252 462 575 [202] feasts with staggering frequency. Only the men may prepare banquet food, and often we were awakened in the middle of the night by the *kulkuls* calling them to kill the turtles and the pigs for a feast. Banquet food takes long to prepare and the animals have to be slaughtered in the middle of the night to ensure the freshness of the meat and of the sauces in the difficult climate of Bali. After two in the morning before a feast everybody was busy; the men chopping meat, cooking, scraping coconuts, building sheds and altars; the women carrying water, making offerings, cutting out ornaments of palm-leaf or wrapping individual packages of *sirih* and betel for the guests.

574 517 By noon the banquet took place, the men sitting in the *balé bandjar* in two long rows facing each other with their individual mountains of rice, pig, and turtle meats served in large squares of banana leaf, drinking *tuak* and making loud jokes. When the [515] meal was over, *kendis* of water were passed so that the guests [264] could wash their hands and mouths. The rest of the day and 517

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coconut wood. Generally one or two sides of the *balé* are protected by a low wall and between the house posts are built-in beds or platforms of wood with springs of bamboo, also called *balés*, where distinguished guests sit cross-legged to eat, or where, with a mattress added and screened by a curtain, they are put up for the night.

In Belaluan everybody was up even before the first rays of the sun outlined the jagged tops of the coconut palms, awakened by the raucous crowings of the fighting cocks. In the indigo semi-darkness of the dawn the women were busily sweeping the yard and bringing water from the village spring. The first thought of the men was for their pets; to line up the bell-shaped cages of the fighting cocks out on the road by the gate so that the roosters might "amuse themselves watching people go by." The cages of the cooing doves were strung up on high poles for them to enjoy the morning air and the sunshine, and the flocks of pigeons, trained to fly in circles over the house, were released for their morning exercise. As protection from birds of prey, they had small brass bells around their necks that produced various humming sounds as they flew round and round until they tired, when they came down to be fed.

After a refreshing bath the men started for the fields without breakfast, taking along a snack – rice boiled inside of little diamond-shaped containers of palm-leaf called *ketipat*. More substantial food was taken to them later if they had to remain in the fields all day, but they returned at noon for lunch if there was not much work or if the sawas were near. Meanwhile the women fetched sheaves of unhusked rice from the granary, spread them on the ground to dry in the sun, filled the *gebah* – the large water-basin in the kitchen – and started the fire for the day's cooking. A kitchen is a simple roof of coarse thatch supported by four posts, with a bamboo platform at one end – the kitchen table – and a primitive mud stove at the other. Often a crude figure is modelled out of the same clay of which the hearth is made to

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ing was placed on the ground. Nobody cared, however, since they were intended for evil spirits, which might, perhaps, be embodied in the dogs.

There were no set meal hours and they ate whenever they felt hungry. A little before noon the men returned from work after

Manner of Drinking
(design scratched on a bamboo drinking-bottle)

taking a bath in the spring or in a river and sat casually somewhere near the kitchen, often turning their backs silently on each other because a person who is eating should not be spoken to. Each was given his portion of rice with its complementary sauce in a square of banana leaf which he held in the hollow of the left hand while the right acted as spoon and fork. The use of dishes and cutlery is to the Balinese an unclean and repulsive foreign habit. Balinese who use plates invariably place a square

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264 512 of banana leaf over them. When finished, the leaf dishes were simply thrown to the pigs; no dishes were left to wash. A *kendih* of water was passed around after the meal, each drinking in turn and at a distance from it, letting a continuous jet of water fall into the open mouth, the lips never touching the spout. (When we tried to drink like the Balinese we succeeded only in choking or drenching ourselves.) The mouth and fingers were rinsed, and after emitting a loud belch of satisfaction the men took a nap or went to the *balé bandjar* to chat before resuming work. [462] Generally the women ate after the men were finished, then fed the pigs, and spent the rest of the afternoon weaving, threshing [515] rice, or simply delousing each other, a great social pastime.

286 177 439 386 For a while it seemed as if the art of hand weaving would be wrecked by the ever increasing importation of foreign cloth. Chinese silk thread was hard to obtain, aniline dyes gave brighter hues and were infinitely easier to handle than the old vegetable dyes, and Japanese rayon for a few cents a yard looked almost like real silk. In later years, however, the affluence of tourists has increased the market for Balinese handicrafts and many women derive an income from selling garish brocades. On our second visit the women of our household took to weaving and every afternoon the characteristic rhythmic sounds of many looms came from all directions.

286 On the Balinese loom (*prabot tennun*) the warp is stretched between a heavy wooden structure (*tjetjaga* and *pendalan*) and a sort of yoke (*épor*) shaped like a Cupid's bow held by the woman's back. After the bamboo spindle (*tunda*) has gone through the warp, the weave is tightened with a long ruler (*belida*) of polished hard wood that slides over a bamboo drum (*pengrorogan*), while the threads are separated with a bamboo tube (*bungbunggan*) provided with little bells that jingle at [461] [534] every move. Thus the work is made easier by the rhythmical sequence of three sounds: the tinkling of the bells, the sound of the hollow bamboo as it is struck by the ruler, and the energetic double knock to tighten the weave. Weaving is the main

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the husk by swishing it around in flat bamboo trays, the centrifugal force throwing the chaff towards the outside.

Everybody bathed again when the work for the day was done; by then the sun had begun to set and the atmosphere had cooled, so it was time to put on clean clothes, *tjempaka* blossoms in the women's hair, great hibiscus behind the ears of the men, and to go visiting or take a stroll and be admired. Back from work, the men sat in groups at the gates or in the middle of the road talking and fondling their fighting cocks until the sun dropped behind the curtain of coconut palms. Sunset [2] comes suddenly in the tropics and in a few seconds it was night, when the lamps were lit and it was time to eat dinner, the cold food left from lunch. There were many ways of spending an evening; elderly men fond of *tuak*, palm beer, belonged to "*tuak* associations" and met at the *balé bandjar*, summoned by a special tomtom. Or if there was a rehearsal of the village orchestra or a meeting at the *balé bandjar*, the men sat talking things over until they were tired, going to bed about nine or ten. But if there was a feast in the neighbourhood, or one of the frequent theatrical performances, the whole family went to watch the show, remaining until it was over, long after midnight.

## BALINESE COOKING

Although the daily meal was frugal, the Balinese seemed exceptionally well fed, and people were always nibbling at some-

[2] The Balinese divide the day into eight periods (dauh) established by the position of the sun in the sky:

| | |
|---|---|
| "One o'clock" (dauh pisan) | about 6 a.m., when the sun appears behind the trees. |
| "Two o'clock" (dauh roh) | about 8 a.m. |
| "Three o'clock" (dauh telú) | 10 a.m. |
| "Four o'clock" (dauh tepat) | at noon. |
| "Five o'clock" (dauh lima) | about 2 p.m. |
| "Six o'clock" (dauh nam) | at 4 p.m. |
| "Seven o'clock" (dauh pitú) | at 6 p.m., when the sun goes down. |
| "Eight o'clock" (dauh kutus) | when it grows dark and the lamps are lit. |

Generally the Balinese simply point to the place of the sun in the sky to indicate an hour. The night is divided thus: from sunset (*penalekan*), then midnight (*tenggah lemang*), to *galang tanah*, before dawn, when the earth becomes visible. Friederich mentions that in Badung there was a special *kulkul* in a clock-tower in which the hours were struck.

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thing. They were continually eating at odd hours, buying strange-looking foods at public eating-booths, in the market, at the crossroads, and particularly at festivals when the food-vendors did a rushing business in chopped mixtures, peanuts, and bright pink drinks. Every day a young vendor came into the compound and invariably found many customers. For five cents she served a large piece of delicious roast chicken with a strong sauce, accompanied by a package of rice that sold for an extra penny. Even small children, accustomed to look out for themselves, bought their snacks from the street vendors, waiting silently for their orders to be mashed and wrapped in neat little packages of banana leaf, paying for them with the kepengs they kept tied in their sashes.

Balinese food is difficult for the palate of a Westerner. Besides being served cold always, food is considered uneatable unless it is violently flavoured with a crushed variety of pungent spices, aromatic roots and leaves, nuts, onions, garlic, fermented fish paste, lemon juice, grated coconut, and burning red peppers. It was so hot that it made even me, a Mexican raised on chili-peppers, cry and break out in beads of perspiration. But after the first shocks, and when we became accustomed to Balinese flavours, we developed into Balinese gourmets and soon started trying out strange new combinations. Siloh Biang understood our appreciation of their delicacies and often brought Rose new dishes to taste. Babies are fed the peppery food as soon as they are weaned and will not touch food without spices and peppers. Most Europeans, used to beef and boiled potatoes, simply cannot eat Balinese food, but on the other hand no Balinese of the average class can be induced even to touch European food, which is *nyam-nyam* to them — that is, "flat and tasteless."

A Brahmanic priest we occasionally visited told us that under no circumstances may Balinese eat the following: "human flesh, tigers, monkeys, dogs, crocodiles, mice, snakes, frogs, certain poisonous fish, leeches, stinging insects, crows, eagles, owls, and in general all birds with moustaches"! We assured him nobody

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placed the offering *tetagpulú*, two truncated cones wrapped, one in black, the other in red thread, each topped by a fan of palm-leaf. They sat on the bed, the boy cross-legged, the girl kneeling, and made reverences (*sembah*), bringing their joined hands three times to their foreheads, each time holding between their middle fingers little *sampian*, fans of palm decorated with flowers. Next the food they had cooked together was brought to them on silver platters, and, with their necks joined by a Tenganan scarf with the warp left uncut, they had to feed each other some rice and twí. Their movements were hampered by the scarf and they were shy and clumsy. The guests thought this extremely funny and laughed heartily, making the couple turn red with embarrassment. They gave each other water to drink from a *kendih*, but the crucial test was the mutual chewing of *sirih*, betel-nut, to which they were not accustomed. The boy chewed the *sirih* reluctantly, making wry faces, handing some already chewed to his bride. This concluded the first half of the ceremony, until the afternoon, when the priest would come to perform their ritual purification.

I was told that among the common people the girl walks three times around the offerings (*pangulapan*) holding the *tetagpulú* in her arms, while two of the boy's relatives hold a string across her path. She walks on until the string breaks (*benang tebusan*). Later the couple walks again three times around a small *dadap* tree specially planted for the occasion, the girl with a platter of rice on her head, the boy carrying on his shoulder a pole loaded with good stuff such as coconuts, a chicken, and a duck. Then they sit side by side behind the priest or witch-doctor (*balian*) and pray while he dedicates the offerings. They also take a meal in public — an act which appears to have a special significance, since only a married couple would ever be seen together eating in public.

The blessing by the priest to purify the couple that we witnessed, at the wedding of a prominent prince of Gianyar, was exceptionally elaborate. Three great sheds had been specially

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(*tatakan*), and joined at the top. Into this body were pushed, besides the central liver, separate weavings for each of the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| *tangkar* | chest |
| *toelang iga-iga* (2) | rib bones |
| *basang wajah* | the old belly |
| *basang ngoeda* | the young belly (intestines) |
| *odel* | navel |
| *lilit linting* | sinews or blood-vessels? (literally, coiling) |

The head was a fan-shaped *linggih-linggihan*, similar to the one topping the *tjanang rébong*. A final addition was the *djan sesapi*, or bird-ladder, indeed formed in the shape of a ladder with two winged birds at the top, inserted into the body "*apang dadi widiadara-widiadari ke tengah*" (so that the *widiadara-widiadari* may get inside). When ready, a few grains of rice and a sheath of betel were dropped into the two figures, and flowers added to adorn their headdresses. Each was then dressed in a little skirt of calico, tied on with a sash. They were placed on the shelf of the *Balé Pengaroeman*, the male to the right and the female upon his left,[14] to await the evening when the spirits would arrive to enter into them.

### *Members' feast* (*Bandjar ketegakan*)

It was now long past midday, and men of the *bandjar* who had been busy all the morning with their steaming, boiling, mixing and grilling of delicacies — an activity quite apart from all that had been going on for the honor of the demons and the gods — had now finished their savory task, and were ready to go home to enjoy the fruits of their labor. The feast of the members, an essential part of temple festivals in the old-style villages, has been dropped as a communal activity in the villages of this district. The members prefer to take each his share home with him, so that he may enjoy it in private, and together with his family. But the term used is still *ketegakan* (to be seated, to eat together), just as if the members had sat down in formal lines to a communal repast. The men left the temple, each bearing his allotment of raw meat, *lawar*, *saté*, and rice. Towards evening the *bandjar* would again be recalled, but this time, for the great majority, it would be the women of the household who came.

### *Giving of offerings* (*Matoeran*)

5 p. m. Shortly before sundown, one could see coming along the lanes leading to the temple, along the foot-paths and along the rims of the rice-field walls, lines of women bearing each an offering on her head.

[14] In other districts we have seen 2, 3, or 1 *pegaloeh*. Sometimes it is said that all are female, sometimes that they are one male and two females, etc.

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to take the form first of dancing (*méndèt; gabor*), with the offerings and regalia, then of various contests (*miasa; mebiasa*) for the gods' diversion.

Ten sets of *banten péndètan* offerings had been prepared to be offered with dancing. The *gamelan* began to play the *gabor* music, and the women and girls danced out from a corner of the temple court, in pairs, each bearing a smoking brazier, a water-vessel, or an offering. They circled and passed each other, approaching and avoiding, their shoulders stiff, their arms extended in slow graceful evolutions, wiggling their hips in the tight binding, and tossing their trains between their ankles with an adept turn of the foot. Many of the people who had been loitering without now came into the court to watch this offering of dancing. The dancers wove in and out across the court, and came to rest, two by two, before the shrine of Soerja. When the first set had danced, the priest joined them, and wafted the essence of their offerings, held high in their two hands, towards the God of the Sun.

The first *taboeh* (see page 49) was danced and offered to Betara Soerja. Then they began to dance again, with a fresh set of offerings, this time wafted towards the same shrine, but dedicated to Betara Siwa. The third and the fourth *taboehs* were in honor of the Goenoeng Agoeng (Mountain), and the Goenoeng Batoer (Mountain), at their shrine; then to the gods of Nagasari. The sixth set was danced as usual, but when it was over the priest and the dancers did not approach any of the shrines — they crouched upon the ground in the center of the court, offering to Saptapetala (Pertiwi, Goddess of Earth).

It is possible, and often done, to dance a *taboeh* to each of the shrines in the temple individually. But on this evening the people had decided to honor the lesser gods in a bunch, and so they danced one *taboeh* to be offered to *betara sami* (all the gods — here including Ramboet Sedana, Brahma, Sedahan Pengenter, Ramboet Sawi, Tengaan Segara in the *Mendjangan Seloeang* shrine, and Ratoe Ngeroerah, who have shrines in the temple court, and the two *Pengapit Lawang* whose shrines stand without the gate).

The eighth *taboeh* danced was offered at the *Pengaroeman* in honor of the *widiadara-widiadari* who were seated there in the persons of the *legaloeh*. Neither were the *gendaroewa* forgotten, for the last two dance figures were offered to the *Panggoengan* inside the court, and to the one outside. The priest led the dancers in a line out through the gate, that they might waft their gifts towards the demons seated without. When they had sprinkled and spilled from their containers, the holy water in the bowl was poured out upon the ground.

As a recompense for their dancing, the women and girls now received the "remains" (*loengsoeran*) of the *péndètan* offerings, rice, peanuts, and cakes, which they ate. No other payment was made to them.

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tion for a feast. In taking the position the Balinese, be he a man of eighty or a child of eight, lowers himself with the back held straight, at the same time pulling the loin-cloth with his two hands tight over the thighs, so that the folds will not hang and expose him indecently. Women are of course, equally modest, and the little girls learn this trick earlier than the boys, for they are generally given a strip of cloth to wrap around them at the age of four or five, whereas the boys run naked several years longer.

Women sit with their legs bent back from the knees, both legs to one side. They may not take the crosslegged position which is proper for the men. A high priest, who has a right to the place of honor, will on entering a European house choose not the most softly cushioned, but the highest chair, and he will cross his legs upon the seat of it. Certain ascetics of noble caste, who have bound themselves to strict rules of behavior, may not sit down to eat facing in any direction except North or East. In the palaces of the nobility men of humble rank may sit or squat, but they are not allowed to stand or walk while a prince is seated. When they have to move about, fulfilling orders, they advance in a half-crouching position. So strongly felt is the matter of relative height that a man may ask one's permission before venturing to climb up a coconut tree to bring one refreshment.

The Balinese prefer to eat alone, and it is forbidden to speak to anyone who is eating. To speak to him would anger the god that is in him.[7] In some villages there used to be a fine imposed on any man who entered another's house and disturbed him while he was eating. Of this fine part was paid directly to the affronted person, part to the community, in compensation for disturbing the peace. Within the household there is no sitting down to a family meal. Each member takes his leaf-plate of rice at his own pleasure, carrying it off into a corner, often turning his back on his friends and relatives.[8] It is only proper to take food in the right hand while eating, although of course both hands are used in the preparation of it. Along the roads, at the markets, and at all performances are little stalls where refreshments are sold. But I have known several Balinese who said it was improper to eat in the street, and that they were "too ashamed" to do it.

[7] Here again, indigestion as a disturbance of bodily well-being is to be feared and avoided.

[8] In my own house I often surprised a boy or girl crouching alone in a dark cupboard absorbing the allotted plateful of rice, while a merry group who were not at the moment eating sat chatting without.

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many hundreds of years static, it has been possible for these laws to grow up, to be sifted and tested over a long period, until they have reached a code eminently suitable to the people whom they govern. For this reason it becomes easy for the child to take over the ways of his elders—the more forcibly impressed upon him because of the weight of tradition behind them, and the fear of transgressing the laws which have been shown by experience to be acceptable to the ever-present gods and demons. Actually the child is afforded no choice at all under the sanction of the community. He has only to obey the prescriptions of tradition to become an adult happily adjusted to the life which is his. And if the child is a girl, she begins very early to feel how her rôle is differentiated from that of a boy. The women accept without rancor the rôle of an inferior. It is simply that they have their being on a different plane from the men. In a society with so many stratifications, that of age within the family, of rank and of relative wealth as between families, the place of woman as an inferior is not seen as a hardship. The system of stratification works smoothly, as a rule, and all those individuals who conform to it seem happy. It is a part of the very order which gives to the life of the Balinese its stability.

## When the Rules May Be Broken

The Balinese way of life even provides an organized release from the rigid code, times when individuals who feel the need of it may break almost all the rules of decorum. These are the occasions of intense and fevered group activity. There is no space here to describe these manifestations in detail, and a few examples of what I mean must suffice. In the prolonged and enthusiastic rehearsals of musicians, actors, and dancers, when all work together in a group, no attention is paid to relative rank, and a performer of noble birth takes his place in equality with the group—he sits on a level with his social inferiors, and bows to their will in matters of artistic production, if their talent be superior to his. At communal feasts men who are accustomed to eating in private gather in groups to partake of the unusual viands and delicacies which they have prepared. Here the taboos do not quite break down, for although they regale themselves with relish, no conversation is allowed between the members feasting together. At the celebration of cremations, several hundred men together cast off their habitual carefully poised bearing, and taking up the body of their friend, or the tower which is to convey